



**BRIEF REMARKS**

*by*

**THE HONOURABLE T. DESMOND BANNISTER, M.P.,**

**MINISTER OF EDUCATION**

*on the occasion of:*

***Roadrunners Track & Field Club  
Annual Presentation & Awards Banquet***

*at*

**Wyndham Nassau Resort & Crystal Palace Casino  
Cable Beach  
The Bahamas**

**4<sup>th</sup>, December 2010**

**7:00 p.m.**

***Salutations:***

1. Mr. Dexter Bodie – President/Head Coach
  
2. Mr. Phil Smith – Marketing Manager of  
D’Albenas Agency & his wife Mrs. Bridgette  
Smith
  
3. Coaches
  
4. Parents
5. Athletes
  
6. Ladies & Gentlemen

***Good Evening!***

I feel particularly blessed to have been asked to participate in the **Roadrunners 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Presentation and Awards Banquet**. As you are aware, there is a special place in my heart for sports and this evening we proudly put the spotlight on our young people, who through discipline, respect, sacrifice and hard work, have earned the title of being called “outstanding athletes.” Honourees, you are indeed excellent role models for your peers and your contribution to the field of athletics thus far is appreciated.

Your theme: ***Achievement: Accepting No Limitation –A Pillar of Excellence- An Attitude of Success***” encourages you not only to dream big, but promises that if you pair it with right character and avid preparation, you will find success. Activities such as: deviant behaviour, laziness of body and mind, lack of respect for authority, the shunning of education, and non-adherence to spiritual values are limitations that do not have to become your reality. Your reality currently is that you are still in school and through your God-given talents and interests you have been led to the discipline of sports. This is fantastic because you now have an added opportunity to have many more doors open to you than the average person for tertiary level education.

If you are aware of this fact, you would also know that accessing such an education depends in great measure on your ability to keep your grade point averages high, and to continue to perform in sports as well as you have been doing. Therefore, students in preparing yourselves for the future, we see that what is needed from each of you is a serious commitment to:

- Earning at least five (5) passes in the BJC and BGCSE examinations with “C” and above;
- Keeping up your performance levels in athletics through constant competition;
- Demonstrating respect, responsibility and good character;
- Avoiding deviant behaviour and criminal records; and
- Keeping a healthy body and mind through exercise and remaining drug free.

The Roadrunners Track & Field Club, since its inception in 1999, have sought to address the social, spiritual, and academic needs in our youth through wholesome sporting activities related to track and field. Through its numerous

programmes and initiatives, athletes are able to build upon their talents and leadership skills, and are encouraged to pursue high academic standards.

This evening, seventy (70) of you are being honoured for your exceptional performances. I congratulate all of you for you are all winners, but I want to pay special recognition to:

(1) Jenero Knowles

- Highest GPA of 3.92 in Temple Christian School;
- Passed 8BJC's (7 "A's" and 1 "B") and

(2) Abiah Missick

- Highest GPA of 3.93 in Faith Temple School;
- Graduated with highest GPA in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade where she was ranked as the number one student.

Jenero and Abiah, through your performances you have brought local and international recognition to yourselves as well as The Bahamas and I encourage you to continue to work hard. I am proud of all of you, and for the other athletes striving to accomplish the same feats, I applaud you

as well. The next time I expect to see many more of you being honoured because like your peers here this evening, you will also make the commitment to perform better in all areas of your lives.

There are many Bahamian superstars who have performed admirably on the world stage. I know that you are familiar with the athletes who are active today, such as: Debbie Ferguson-McKenzie, Chris Brown, Leevan Sands, Chandra Sturup and Shemar Sands, but you should also learn about the lives of some of the athletes such as: Tommy Robinson, Rudy Levarity, Maryann Higgs, Laverne Eve, Shonel Ferguson, Frank Rutherford and Troy Kemp who have helped to pave the way in track and field for athletes such as yourselves. These Bahamians have all done well for The Bahamas and we encourage you to be inspired by and to emulate them. We want you to always demonstrate good sportsmanship, and represent our country well by being good ambassadors whenever you have the opportunity to travel abroad.

I applaud Mr. Bodie and his dedicated team of coaches which include: Perry Adderley, Mildred Adderley, Tonia

Bowleg. Tamiko Taylor, and Fiona Tucker. To the organizations who have partnered with the Roadrunners Track Club, your support is invaluable and this awards ceremony tells you that you are not wasting your resources, but that you are actually playing a great role in the building of our nation's youth. I want all of the athletes in this room to give the coaches and partners a huge round of applause, because without their guidance and knowledge you would not have gotten very far. I also commend the parents who know how vital their support is to their children's success. For those of you who stood in the stands cheering, purchased warm-up suits and sprints for your child, participated in fund raising activities, mentored, celebrated a win and dried a tear after a loss, I urge you not to stop. It is remarkable the heights to which our children can rise if we are there for them. The club is an outlet for your child to develop mentally, physically and spiritually and so I encourage you to pay dues, volunteer your services, donate equipment, and participate in as many of its activities as you can.

Juma Ikangaa, a Marathon runner from Tanzania once said:  
***“The will to win means nothing without the will to***

***prepare.***” Honourees, with knowledge and preparation you can realize your full potential. Let the success that you have experienced here spill over into other areas of your lives. Once again, congratulations and best wishes for the future.

Thank you!